

## **FOSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Captain Isaac Paine School  
160 Foster Center Road  
Foster, RI 02825

Tuesday, November 26, 2013  
Open Session – 7:00 PM

1. **Convene Meeting** – the meeting of the Foster School Committee (FSC) was called to order at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, November 27, 2013 by Vice Chair, Shelley Pezza.
  - a. *Roll Call* – the following members were present at the time of roll call: Shelley Pezza, Vice Chair, and member, Ron Cervasio. Also present were Superintendent, Caroline Caswell, Legal Counsel, Greg Piccirilli, and Secretary, Mrs. McCullough. Chair, Kathleen Swanson, arrived at 7:15 pm.
  - b. *Pledge of Allegiance* – was recited by all.

2. **Public Comment** – there was no Public Comment.

Vice Chair, Shelley Pezza, moved, Item # 4, Building Use Request, Item #5, Approval of Minutes, Item #6, Approval of Warrants, and Item #8d, to this point on the Agenda.

**Building Use Request** – there were no requests.

**Approval of Minutes** – on a motion by Mr. Cervasio and seconded by Ms. Pezza, the FSC approved the Open and Executive Session Minutes for September 22, 2013 and Executive Session Minutes from August 27, 2013. Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-0.

**Approval of Warrants** – on a motion by Mr. Cervasio and seconded by Ms. Pezza, the FSC approved Warrant “Oct. Bills” dated Oct. 29, 2013 for \$237,371.25 and Warrant “Nov. Bills” dated November 5, 2013 for \$128,066.63. Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-0.

**December Meeting – Change** – the FSC scheduled a meeting on December 17, 2013 at 7:15 pm.

3. On a motion by Mr. Cervasio and Ms. Pezza, the FSC **voted to go into Executive Session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business referred to in R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a) ) (1) Personnel, Job Performance / Character of an Individual – Education Evaluator (2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation – Educational Support Personnel and Foster Teachers’ Association.** Motion passed. Vote = 2-0-0.

4. **Building Use Requests**

## **5. Approval of Minutes**

## **6. Approval of Warrants**

- a. *Business Manager's Report* – Mr. Michael Petrarca informed the FSC that the School Department finished last year (2012-2013) with a surplus of \$36,787.00 (unaudited). He also reported a possible deficit for the 2013-2014 school year of around \$85,000. Discussion followed. No votes were taken.

## **7. Old Business (for discussion/action)**

- a. *2012-2013 Budget*
- b. *2013-2014 Budget* – this will be discussed under Item #8b.
- c. *Facilities Update* – Dr. Caswell informed the FSC that she received two requests for masonry work on the chimney but because of the possible fund deficit, she is placing them on hold. Mr. Joe McGovern, Building and Grounds Manager, reported that over the years repairs are taken care of as they happen. There is no maintenance plan in place or monies put aside for these kinds of repairs/updates.
- d. *Technology Update* – Dr. Caswell reported to the FSC that through RIDE's bond referendum there may be a possibility that we will receive some funding for wireless capabilities, with the understanding that this is for classrooms only. The ASPEN migration is in process. This is the new Student Information System. CODE day is a STEM activity, free of charge, involving computer science activities sponsored by Rhode Island College taking place throughout the country in December. Survey Works, about school culture and climate, is happening in November and December. PARCC, the future process for student testing, will be presented at December's meeting.

## **8. New Business (for discussion/action)**

- a. *Presentation – Robotics – Spelling* – Mr. Cervasio spoke to the future of robotics in our lives with robots recording an order, packing, shipping and delivering the order.
- b. *2013-2014 Budget Revisions* – Dr. Caswell stated that she is not in favor of any of the following cuts: elimination of part time custodian (impact = building less clean), reduction of evening custodian (impact = building less clean, early closure of building, community groups will need to pay for extra custodial services for evening events Monday through Friday, extra burden on custodial staff), elimination of Curriculum Coordinator (Title II funds), elimination of Foster Early Learning Together (FELT) as of Holiday vacation (impact = no Early Childhood services for participating families), or the reduction of FELT services by March or April 2014 (impact = no Early Childhood services for participating families), elimination of teacher assistant(s) in self-contained classroom (impact = students no longer receive one to one services), eliminate a classroom in first

grade and reassign dis-placed teacher to fourth grade, due to retirement, (impact = students having to move to a new classroom and teacher, disruption to education / learning). Discussion followed: unemployment compensation was not reflected in figures provided; possible negotiations with bus company, and several contractual issues will need addressing.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mr. Cervasio, the FSC authorized the Superintendent to meet with the Foster Teachers' Association and the Education Support Personnel to discuss contractual issues regarding these reductions (suggested reductions) by December 17<sup>th</sup>. Discussion followed. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

- c. *December Meeting – Change* – discussed earlier on the agenda.
- d. *Quarterly and Monthly Reports* – all reports are up to date.
- e. *Window Update* – Mrs. Swanson asked where the school department stood with the Fire Marshall and if they would allow a delay of the window update. Mr. McGovern said that as of today he and Dr. Caswell had discussed this same topic. Mr. McGovern said that a request for a variance is needed. Dr. Caswell met with John Lewis and submitted a letter to the Town to ask for emergency funds to come under code. Mr. Cervasio requested moving forward with the Fire Marshal to request a delay due to financial restraints that the school and town are under. Mr. McGovern had the paperwork for a while for an appeal with the state fire marshal and to request a variance. The FSC suggested that Legal Counsel and Mr. McGovern review the report and decide how to proceed. No votes were taken.
- f. *Budget Workshop – Schedule* – Dr. Caswell and Mr. Petraca recommended creating some guidelines and a time table for the Budget Workshops for the December meeting.

## **9. Communication/Reports**

- a. *Correspondence* – Dr. Caswell received and read some bullet points from a quarterly report from FELT. She also received nine letters of support for FELT. Mrs. Morrissey assembled packets of all the letters for the FSC.
- b. *Principal's Report* – there was no Principal's report. However, Dr. Caswell mentioned that DATA Day, funded through Race to the Top funds and facilitated by RIDE, was held and all grade level staff were able to participate.
- c. *Superintendent's Report*
  - 1) *Capital Improvement Plan* – Dr. Caswell presented her Capital Improvement Plan to the FSC and will submit the plan to the Town by the dates due. Discussion followed. No votes were taken.

- 2) *Educator Evaluation* – Dr. Caswell shared the RIDE report for Educator Evaluations done in 2012-2013. Eighteen (18) staff members were evaluated and seventeen (17) exceeded their SLO goals and 1 fully meet the goal and resulted in all 18 staff being highly effective by the state standard. Discussion followed.

**10. Future Agenda Items**

- a. Full Day Kindergarten impact with First Grade
- b. PARCC
- c. Kindergarten Entrance Age
- d. Budget Workshops
- e. Capital Improvements

At this point the FSC reconvened Executive Session.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mr. Cervasio the FSC voted to reconvene Open Session. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

Mrs. Swanson reported out that Personnel, Job Performance / Character of and Individual – Education Evaluator and Collective Bargaining and Litigation for Educational Support Personnel and Foster Teachers’ Association were discussed and no votes were taken.

On a motion by Ms. Pezza and seconded by Mr. Cervasio, the FSC voted to “seal” Executive Session minutes. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

11. **Adjournment** – on a motion by Mrs. Swanson and seconded by Ms. Pezza, the FSC adjourned at 9:35 pm. Motion passed. Vote = 3-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Helena McCullough  
Secretary Foster School Committee